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FM AMEMBASSY ABUJA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6146
INFO RUEHOS/AMCONSUL LAGOS PRIORITY 1404
RUEHZK/ECOWAS COLLECTIVE
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC
RUCPDO/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHDC
RUEAWJA/DEPT OF JUSTICE WASHDC

UNCLAS ABUJA 000943

SIPDIS

DEPT PASS TO USTR-AGAMA
TREASURY FOR PETERS AND IERONIMO
DOC FOR 3317/ITA/OA/KBURRESS AND
3130/USFC/OIO/ANESA/DHARRIS
DOJ FOR KOUAME

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KIPR](#) [ETRD](#) [PGOV](#) [NI](#)

SUBJECT: NIGERIA: GOVERNMENT AND INDUSTRY AGREE TO FIGHT PIRACY

¶1. (U) Summary. At May 5-6 conference on the enforcement of copyrights, the Government of Nigeria (GON) was called upon, by stakeholders participating at the conference, to provide sufficient funding for Intellectual Property (IP) agencies, in addition to amending IP laws to strengthen enforcement and accommodate recent global developments in the IP arena. Participants highlighted the need for inter-agency and regional cooperation, and continuous public awareness on IP protection. End Summary.

¶2. Marking the twentieth anniversary of the Nigerian Copyright Commission (NCC), a conference on the enforcement of copyright, co-sponsored by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and the NCC, was held on May 5-6. The conference's theme was "Building Strategies for Effective Protection and Enforcement in the Twenty First Century". It highlighted the importance of inter-agency collaboration in IP administration and protection and effect the technological advancement has on copyright protection.

¶3. Opening remarks at the event were provided by the Deputy Chief of Mission, Minister for Labor and Productivity, the Information and Communications Minister and others. Participants came from both the private and public sectors, to include officials from the Nigerian Custom Service, Nigeria Police, National Film and Video Censors Board (NFVCB), and Association of Movie Producers (AMP) and other agencies and organizations.

Enlightenment

¶4. The threat of piracy was highlighted by all presenters. While participants were willing to blame pirates, it was noted that most people, including "enlightened" Nigerians, buy pirated works. One way to run pirates out of business is by refusing to buy their products.

¶5. Participants agreed to joint GON and industry stakeholders awareness campaigns on the ills of piracy and the effects it has on the economic development to be intensified across the country. Local film industry representatives called for training from the IP agencies on protecting their rights in regards to their works. Workshops on how to draft and implement contracts with distributors are planned for the future. The NFVCB is in the process of developing a new film distribution and exhibition framework to combat piracy in the film industry.

Empowerment and Enforcement

¶6. The need to provide adequate funding to relevant IP agencies was underscored. Budgetary allocations are insufficient and late. Adequate funds are needed to conduct enforcement operations and pay

for media campaigns. Participants agreed that since budget problems are here to stay inter-agency collaboration should be strengthened in order to leverage resources available to each IP agency and reduce the burden each agency carries when operating solely.

¶7. Industry participants and GON IP officials highlighted the importance of continuous collaboration in enforcing IP rights. Enforcement against high profile targets would send a signal to pirates that piracy is taken seriously. Current laws should be amended to strengthen enforcement and accommodate recent global developments in IP.

Comment

¶8. The turnout of GON officials at the conference was commendable. It shows that political support and awareness for combating piracy is growing. Industry stakeholders and GON IP officials engaged frankly and agreed on further collaboration to combat piracy. End comment.

¶9. This report was coordinated with Consulate Lagos.

SANDERS